

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Grammar Lessons

### Mechanics – Sentence Structure and Formation – Comma Splices

**SSF.28-32-1: Use sentence-combining techniques, effectively avoiding problematic comma splices, run-on sentences, and sentence fragments, especially in sentences containing compound subjects or verbs**

**Independent clause:** (or **main clause**) is a **clause** that can stand by itself as a simple sentence.

**Comma splice:** The use of a **comma** to *join* two **independent clauses**.

Example: It is nearly half past five, we cannot reach town before dark.

(Two independent clauses being made into one sentence through the use of a comma- this is incorrect in English).

**Instructions:** Add a word to join the sentence together or separate the clauses by some other form of punctuation.

<p><b><i>Ms. Waite does these...</i></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I went to the store, I saw a man standing on the corner.</li><li>2. Dogs have large canine teeth, mice have large molars.</li><li>3. My grandmother lives in the country, her house is very big.</li><li>4. It takes five apples to make an apple pie, it takes ten to make applesauce.</li></ol>
<p><b><i>We, as a class, will do these...</i></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. It was raining, I decided to go anyway.</li><li>6. There was only one left, I left it for you.</li><li>7. She wouldn't sing, she wouldn't play the guitar.</li><li>8. The cat walked quietly, it was stalking the mouse.</li><li>9. I felt the anger rise within me, I held my temper.</li></ol>
<p><b><i>You will do these...</i></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>10. You may stay, you may go.</li><li>11. We had to move the piano first, how else could we get at the electrical outlet?</li><li>12. I knew I had to go, it was the only way to keep everyone happy.</li><li>13. My hamster runs on his wheel, I can't stand the noise.</li><li>14. She wanted to go, she had nothing else to do.</li><li>15. The boy insisted he wanted the candy, he isn't supposed to have it.</li></ol>

## Grammar Lessons **Answers**

### Mechanics – Sentence Structure and Formation – Comma Splices

**SSF.28-32-1: Use sentence-combining techniques, effectively avoiding problematic comma splices, run-on sentences, and sentence fragments, especially in sentences containing compound subjects or verbs**

**Independent clause:** (or **main clause**) is a **clause** that can stand by itself as a simple sentence.

**Comma splice:** The use of a **comma** to *join* two **independent clauses**.

Example: It is nearly half past five, we cannot reach town before dark.

(Two independent clauses being made into one sentence through the use of a comma- this is incorrect in English).

**Instructions:** Add a word to join the sentence together or separate the clauses by some other form of punctuation.

<p><b><i>Ms. Waite does these...</i></b></p>	<p>1. I went to the store, <b>and</b> I saw a man standing on the corner.</p> <p>2. Dogs have large canine teeth, <b>but</b> mice have large molars.</p> <p>3. My grandmother lives in the country. Her house is very big.</p> <p>4. It takes five apples to make an apple pie, <b>but</b> it takes ten to make applesauce.</p>
<p><b><i>We, as a class, will do these...</i></b></p>	<p>5. It was raining, <b>but</b> I decided to go anyway.</p> <p>6. There was only one left, <b>so</b> I left it for you.</p> <p>7. She wouldn't sing, <b>nor would she</b> play the guitar.</p> <p>8. The cat walked quietly; it was stalking the mouse.</p> <p>9. I felt the anger rise within me; I held my temper.</p>
<p><b><i>You will do these...</i></b></p>	<p>10. You may stay, <b>or</b> you may go.</p> <p>11. We had to move the piano first; how else could we get at the electrical outlet?</p> <p>12. I knew I had to go; it was the only way to keep everyone happy.</p> <p>13. My hamster runs on his wheel; I can't stand the noise.</p> <p>14. She wanted to go; she had nothing else to do.</p> <p>15. The boy insisted he wanted the candy, <b>but</b> he isn't supposed to have it.</p>

## Correcting comma splices

A complete sentence has (*at least*) two parts, a subject and a verb. A sentence must also express a complete thought. This kind of phrase consisting of a subject and a verb (with complete meaning) is also called an *independent clause*.

**Example:** He sings songs.

This sentence has a subject and verb. This sentence also expresses a complete thought, so its meaning is clear.  
he=subject sings=verb songs=direct object

You **cannot separate two independent clauses with just a comma**; you need *a comma and a coordinating conjunction*, or a *different form of punctuation* (like a period or a semicolon).

**A coordinating conjunction is:** a word that joins two complete, independent thoughts. There are seven coordinating conjunctions. Think: FANBOYS. They are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*. Any one of them can be inserted **after** a comma splice to correct the sentence.

**Semicolons** can often be used as the cure for the comma splice. Semicolons differ from all other forms of punctuation in that **they are used to subordinate one complete thought to another**. In other words, **semicolons may be used to show the relationship between two distinct but inseparable thoughts**.

**Directions: Rewrite the sentence and** use a period, a semicolon, or a coordinating conjunction to correct the comma splice (depending on the sentence and what fix is appropriate for it).

1. He took a walk, he saw a movie.
2. The dog caught the ball, she barked and ran away with it.
3. He was tired, he went to bed.
4. He took a walk, he saw a movie.
5. The tree house was nestled in the oak tree, no one could see it.
6. She had a lot of money, she decided to spend it.
7. The papers were perfect, there would be no need for revisions.
8. The sheep were still in the pasture, the dog would have to go get them.
9. The engine was overheated, we would have to walk back to town.
10. The cat had no choice but to drop the mouse, the tiny creature had sunk its teeth into its attacker's cheek!

## Correcting comma splices **Answers**

A complete sentence has (*at least*) two parts, a subject and a verb. A sentence must also express a complete thought. This kind of phrase consisting of a subject and a verb (with complete meaning) is also called an *independent clause*.

**Example:** He sings songs.

This sentence has a subject and verb. This sentence also expresses a complete thought, so its meaning is clear.  
he=subject sings=verb songs=direct object

You **cannot separate two independent clauses with just a comma**; you need *a comma and a coordinating conjunction*, or a *different form of punctuation* (like a period or a semicolon).

**A coordinating conjunction is:** a word that joins two complete, independent thoughts. There are seven coordinating conjunctions. Think: FANBOYS. They are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*. Any one of them can be inserted **after** a comma splice to correct the sentence.

**Semicolons** can often be used as the cure for the comma splice. Semicolons differ from all other forms of punctuation in that **they are used to subordinate one complete thought to another**. In other words, **semicolons may be used to show the relationship between two distinct but inseparable thoughts**.

**Directions: Rewrite the sentence and** use a period, a semicolon, or a coordinating conjunction to correct the comma splice (depending on the sentence and what fix is appropriate for it).

1. He took a walk. He saw a movie.
2. The dog caught the ball. She barked and ran away with it.
3. He was tired, so he went to bed.
4. He took a walk, and he saw a movie.
5. The tree house was nestled in the oak tree, so no one could see it.
6. She had a lot of money, and she decided to spend it.
7. The papers were perfect; there would be no need for revisions.
8. The sheep were still in the pasture; the dog would have to go get them.
9. The engine was overheated; we would have to walk back to town.
10. The cat had no choice but to drop the mouse; the tiny creature had sunk its teeth into its attacker's cheek!